

# Inspection of Our Lady and St Kenelm RC School

Bundle Hill, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 4AR

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Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2021

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| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | <b>Good</b>        |
| The quality of education     | <b>Good</b>        |
| Behaviour and attitudes      | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| Personal development         | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| Leadership and management    | <b>Good</b>        |
| Early years provision        | <b>Good</b>        |
| Previous inspection grade    | Outstanding        |

This school was last inspected six years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud of their school. They say, 'We have what we want and more.' Pupils are polite, kind and respectful. They enjoy belonging to their school family and make a positive contribution to the work of the school.

Pupils play an active part in making the school a place where all are safe and welcome. Through their many roles in the school, such as the 'Lunch Bunch', 'Play-Leaders' and 'Diana Ambassadors', pupils look after each other and help each other to behave extremely well. Bullying is rare. Staff do not tolerate it.

Leaders have very high expectations for every pupil in the school. The schools' mission statement is 'Bringing out the best in everyone, for the benefit of all in the Spirit of Christ'. Pupils work hard to rise to this challenge. They are eager to learn, and they enjoy lessons. This is because leaders have designed an engaging and ambitious curriculum.

There are also many opportunities for pupils to extend their learning out of the classroom. Pupils enjoy forest school, trips, theatre productions and visits from experts. Pupils particularly enjoyed using virtual reality headsets to see the buildings from ancient civilisations. Pupils benefit greatly from a range of clubs, both at lunchtime and after school, that develop their interests and talents.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders, governors and staff have high expectations for all pupils and an ambition for them all to succeed. They have created a rich curriculum that supports this ambition. The opportunities leaders provide help to develop pupils personally, as well as academically.

Pupils in the early years make a good start in the pre-school setting. They listen and respond well to staff and are highly engaged in their learning. The curriculum has a clear emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of language and vocabulary. In Reception, pupils have settled into routines and are positive towards adults and each other. They are learning to read, write and count. They show a good understanding of the curriculum taught so far.

In early years, the curriculum identifies the skills and knowledge children will know and remember in most areas of learning. There are clear links to the curriculum for the rest of the school. In some areas of learning, the specific knowledge that children will learn is still being developed.

Leaders make sure that reading is a priority in the school. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading. This starts with phonics in early years and Year 1. Most staff have a secure subject knowledge and further training is in place to help all staff develop their expertise. Leaders and staff use a range of assessments and interventions to help pupils keep up and catch up. Leaders have recently bought

new reading books that match the letter sounds pupils know. Pupils who struggle to read are developing the skills to read fluently and confidently.

The curriculum in mathematics identifies the knowledge and skills pupils will learn in a logical sequence. The majority of pupils know and understand what they are learning and can apply these well. This is because they get the chance to practise and go over their new learning. A small number of pupils do not yet have a secure understanding of their recent learning.

Plans for all subjects from Year 1 to Year 6 clearly identify the knowledge that pupils should know and remember. For some subjects, there is an enquiry-based approach. This is helping pupils, particularly the older ones, to know and remember more. They can also make links between different areas of the curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons and all aspects of school life. If pupils need extra help with their work, staff are quick to step in or offer extra resources. This is helping them to learn. As local needs change, the school is working closely with external agencies to get the right support for pupils at the right time.

The school's work to develop responsible, active and respectful pupils is exemplary. Large numbers of pupils carry out roles that help support others. This extends beyond their school community through their work as 'Mini Vinnies'. Pupils are confident and prepared well for life in modern Britain. They learn about rules, democracy and the importance of showing respect for others.

Many parents are positive about the school and the vast majority feel that their child is safe, happy and well taught. However, a number of parents do not feel that leaders listen to them when they raise a concern about their child's education.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure all staff receive regular and varied safeguarding training. This helps staff to identify any concerns. There are systems in place that all staff know and understand. Leaders respond to concerns in a timely fashion and work with other agencies to meet the needs of children and their families. This makes sure pupils are safe. Leaders' work to make sure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe is strong. Pupils know how to stay safe online and out in the community. Leaders make sure that pupils moving to secondary school are well prepared.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Not all areas of the curriculum in early years clearly identify the specific knowledge that children will learn. This risks hindering children's development in

these areas. Leaders must ensure the curriculum clearly identifies the specific knowledge that children will learn.

- Not all parents feel that senior leaders are receptive to the issues they raise. As a result, some parents do not feel their views are considered or valued. Leaders must make sure that they build effective channels of communication with parents when they raise concerns to ensure they feel their views are considered as part of their children's education.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 103850   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Dudley   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10202703   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 203  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Pete Johnson   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Christine Finnegan   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.our-lady.dudley.sch.uk">www.our-lady.dudley.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 22 and 23 October 2015, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.         |

## Information about this school

- Our Lady and St Kenelm is a Catholic primary school for pupils aged 4 to 11.
- Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher; deputy headteacher; special educational needs coordinator; designated safeguarding lead (DSL); subject leaders; and governors, including the chair of the governing body; and spoke to representatives of the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and discussed other subjects, including geography and music, and other activities with staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, who is the DSL. Pupils' case files were reviewed. The single central record of the checks on staff's suitability to work with children was scrutinised.
- Inspectors met with staff, including early career teachers, experienced teachers and support staff, to discuss their workload and the support they receive to carry out their roles.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about how safe they feel in school and how they learn to keep themselves safe.
- Inspectors visited the pre-school and Reception class.
- Inspectors spoke to parents.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the staff questionnaire.
- There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Helen Forrest, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Stephanie Moran

Her Majesty's Inspector

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